IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A method of processing rich media content, comprising the steps of:

combining a plurality of diverse rich media content into a single multimedia content file for use as a first input to an authoring tool;

creating an extensible markup language (XML) based textual specification for use as a second input to the authoring tool, wherein the XML-based textual specification comprises a user-specified vocabulary that defines one or more of the plurality of diverse rich media content and relationships between two or more of the plurality of diverse rich media content; and

combining the single multimedia content file and the XML-based textual specification in accordance with the user-specified vocabulary and using the authoring tool to create a composed multimedia content file for execution on a multimedia player[[.]] , wherein the composed multimedia content file is combinable with at least one of an additional XML-based textual specification and an additional graphical edit of the plurality of diverse rich media contents;

editing the plurality of diverse rich media content using a graphical authoring tool;

creating a second XML-based textual specification file for the graphically edited rich media content; and

storing the composed multimedia content file and the second XML-based textual specification for access by one or more content creators.

2. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of:

editing the XML-based textual specification by a user using a text editor.

3. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of creating an XML-based textual specification further comprises the step of:

using an XML program to create the XML-based textual specification.

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4. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of combining the single multimedia content file and the XML-based textual specification further comprises the step of:

executing a batch processing program to combine the single multimedia content file and the XML-based textual specification.

5. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of:

transmitting the plurality of diverse rich media content as a streaming digital file.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of:

downloading the composed multimedia content file for display to a user in an application.

9. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 5 wherein the step of transmitting the plurality of diverse rich media content as a streaming digital file further comprises the step of:

generating the streaming digital file as a sequence of frames.

10. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 5 wherein the step of transmitting the plurality of diverse rich media content as a streaming digital file further comprises the step of:

generating the streaming digital file as a binary file using a HotMedia format.

11. (Currently amended) An authoring system for creating text based rich media, comprising:

a processor for receiving a plurality of diverse rich media;

means for assembling the plurality of diverse rich media as a combined multimedia vehicle repository (MVR) file; and

means for automatically generating an XML-based textual specification comprising a user-specified vocabulary that defines one or more of the plurality of diverse rich media and relationships between two or more of the plurality of diverse rich media; ~~and~~

means for combining the MVR file and the XML-based textual specification in accordance with the user-specified vocabulary to create an edited MVR file for execution on a multimedia player[[.]] , wherein the composed multimedia content file is combinable with at least one of an additional XML-based textual specification and an additional graphical edit of the plurality of diverse rich media contents;

means for editing the plurality of diverse rich media content using a graphical authoring tool;

means for creating a second XML-based textual specification file for the graphically edited rich media content; and

means for storing the composed multimedia content file and the second XML-based textual specification for access by one or more content creators.

12. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 11 further comprising:

a batch processing program running on the processor for combining the combined MVR file and the XML-based textual specification as an edited MVR file.

13. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 11 further comprising:

an XML program running in the processor for translating descriptive text in combining the MVR file and the XML-based textual specification.

14-17. (Canceled).

18. (Currently amended) An article of manufacture for processing rich media content, comprising a machine readable medium containing one or more programs which when executed implement the steps of:

combining a plurality of diverse rich media content into a single multimedia content file as a first input to an authoring tool;

creating an XML-based textual specification for use as a second input to the authoring tool, wherein the XML-based textual specification comprises a user-specified vocabulary that defines one or more of the plurality of diverse rich media content and relationships between two or more of the plurality of diverse rich media content; and

combining the single rich media content and the XML-based textual specification in accordance with the user-specified vocabulary and using the authoring tool to create a composed multimedia content file for execution on a multimedia player[[.]] , wherein the composed multimedia content file is combinable with at least one of an additional XML-based textual specification and an additional graphical edit of the plurality of diverse rich media contents;

editing the plurality of diverse rich media content using a graphical authoring tool;

creating a second XML-based textual specification file for the graphically edited rich media content; and

storing the composed multimedia content file and the second XML-based textual specification for access by one or more content creators.

19. (Previously presented) The article of manufacture of Claim 18 further comprising:

enabling the editing of the XML-based textual specification by a user using a text editor.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously presented) The article of manufacture of Claim 18 further comprising:

a batch processing program for combining the XML-based textual specification and the single multimedia content file.

22. (Previously presented) The article of manufacture of Claim 18 further comprising:

transmitting the plurality of diverse rich media content as a streaming digital file.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Canceled)

25. (Previously presented) The article of manufacture of Claim 18 further comprising:
downloading the composed multimedia content file for display to a user in an ebusiness application.

26. (Previously presented) The article of manufacture of Claim 22 further comprising:
generating the streaming digital file as a sequence of frames.

27. (Previously presented) The article of manufacture of Claim 22 further comprises:
generating the streaming digital file as a binary file in a HotMedia format.

28. (Canceled)